Better Bus Service Starts With Faster Refueling

Oakville Transit is a public transportation provider in Oakville, Ontario, Canada since 1972, providing conventional bus service and para-transit service (care-A-van) totaling up to 104 buses in their fleet.

A team of 3 staff members are responsible for fueling, prepping and washing around 97 buses for each new shift, taking an average of 7 minutes to complete each bus. This crucial process must be properly executed every time in order to support a mixed fleet of Blue Bird, Orion, New Flyer, Ford E350 and E450 minibuses for care-A-van service.

Process Improvement

- Automating and improving the accuracy of odometer data collected from each bus in the fleet during the refueling and washing process.
- Saving the refueling team from manual data entry and the repetitive motion of bending down to read the hub odometer.

Fueling happens every day between 6 PM to 2:30AM, which becomes an opportunity for the team to do much more than just fuel the tank. Listed below is a checklist for the fueling team:

- dispense the diesel,
- inspect each unit,
- fill the washer fluid,
- check the oil,
- gather the reading from the hub odometer,
- wash the bus every 2nd day,
- and park it in the bus barn for the drivers in the morning to find.

SOLUTIONS provided by Computrol

- Telematics - COBI On Board Information System
- Wirelessly transmit odometer data from each bus
- Able to support a mixed fleet of Blue Bird, Orion, New Flyer, Ford E350 and E450
- Automate and improve the accuracy of odometer data collection
- Key Point – Automation integrated with existing processes for fueling, prepping and washing for the fleet
This checklist was created to ensure all critical steps are taken every time. With such a large facility, fuelers get their daily 10,000 steps during each shift.

Any automation or improvement that saves time will significantly magnify over a period of use.

Oakville was looking for a way to save their fuelers from having to bend down and read the hub odometer in the wheel of each bus they fuel. According to Fuel Manager, Andrew Sherratt, “these hub odometers can be tough to read even at the best of times, especially if its 2 o’clock in the morning and you have just looked at 100 other buses. Having to bend down and read a series of numbers rotated on side view and to enter the digits manually is quite laborious.”

One of Computrol’s dealers, SAS Petroleum, brought this to our attention. Our engineers then recommended Computrol’s COBI telematics system. Designed to automate data collection from the vehicles, the fuelers would no longer have to bend down and enter the data manually. Additionally, the Computrol System was expanded by adding 6 terminals for the control of lubrication and washer fluid stations.

The COBI system has been in operation at Oakville for 2 years now. It saves about 30 seconds to 1.5 minutes for each bus, totaling up to 35,000 minutes every year. This innovation has created more efficiency within Oakville’s team, improved data quality and saved them countless of steps overall.